

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Kathy Hunt  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Edmond Doyle Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 520 E. Smith Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City McAlester State OK Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 74501-2652

County Pittsburg

Telephone (918) 423-0588 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL https://www.mcalester.k12.ok.us/240044\_2 E-mail khunt@mcalester.k12.ok.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Randy Hughes E-mail rhughes@mcalester.k12.ok.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name McAlester Public School District Tel. (918) 423-4771

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mrs. Joy Tribbey  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The electronic signature on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	20	27	47
2	24	20	44
3	22	20	42
4	21	23	44
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	87	90	177

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 13 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 7 % Black or African American
  - 14 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 43 % White
  - 23 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 12%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	21
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	176
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 8 %  
14 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

Total number students who qualify: 177

8. Students receiving special education services: 22 %  
39 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>5</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>2</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>15</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 9
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	8
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2014

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

We believe that excellence is the key to student success. Parents, school, and community work together to guide students in attaining their goals and dreams.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Edmond Doyle has been operating on a hybrid model for the 2020-2021 school year. Most students attend a brick and mortar setting, but there have been a small number of the students attending virtually through the Edmond Doyle Virtual School. The virtual students were able to attend virtually with classroom teachers leading online instruction both synchronously and asynchronously. The district was able to maintain this model with the exception of one day in December due to a large number of COVID cases across the district and two weeks in February for inclement winter weather. During both of these timeframes, Edmond Doyle students took part in distance learning, along with the rest of the school district, via the district Learning Management Systems, Seesaw and Google Classroom.

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Edmond Doyle Elementary is a Title I school with 100% of our students qualifying for free and reduced lunches through the Community Eligibility Program. Our families consist of single parents, grandparents as guardians, incarcerated parents, traditional two parent homes, and foster families. We also serve our local drug and alcohol rehabilitation center that allows mothers from all over the state to bring their children to treatment with them. We also get to serve children living with mothers from Hope House, a women's shelter in our community. We strive to forge a strong connection between home and school that creates an atmosphere of optimal success for every child. We are committed to helping children of all backgrounds realize their personal potential no matter what circumstance. In doing so, we utilize research-based methods of instruction and best practices to assess student progress, ensure academic success, and develop responsible students.

Our school is located in the historic district of McAlester. The home of our town's founder, J.J. McAlester, is located nearby. Edmond Doyle Elementary was one of the first public schools established in our community, and traditionally has had a working-class family clientele that believes in hard work, respect, and education. As the poverty levels across our state and community have increased, Edmond Doyle Elementary has seen its share of negative societal issues. We face the same challenges most schools in America experience. However, our philosophy steadfastly remains...a person can overcome any obstacle with the right attitude and the right choices. We strive to teach our students that no matter what life may throw your way; you have the power to change your circumstances by becoming life-long learners and making conscious efforts to do the right thing. We teach our students that every choice we make determines what we will have, who we will become, and what we will achieve in our lifetime. Many of our students have experienced trauma in their young lives. Our goal is to give each child positive goals and directions they can take. We stress to them that each good choice made is a step toward success. We constantly reinforce that good choices made daily create a better life.

Our school's strength comes from the dedication, experience, and commitment of our faculty/staff in addition to strong parental support. In our school culture, everyone plays an important role in the lives of our students. The school secretary, custodian, cafeteria workers, and paraprofessionals work alongside teachers to provide our students with the best education possible. Our teachers are all are rated as highly effective or superior on their Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (OKTLE) evaluations. They spend countless hours beyond what is required to prepare, tutor, and create lessons that are engaging and meaningful for our students.

The level of care, love, and concern our students receive from countless adults surrounding them is phenomenal, and the lasting impact of these efforts is immeasurable. For many children, the positive attention and validation they get from school is a necessary counter-agent to difficulties they may be experiencing at home.

Another strength of our school is the collective attitude and work ethic of our students. Our students are very special. Most truly enjoy school and find it to be a refuge. The pandemic has changed the way we operate. In the past, guests who visited Edmond Doyle were always impressed with how well behaved they found our students. When school field trips were allowed, a common theme voiced by observers was the polite, respectful, and thoughtful demeanor exhibited by our students. This can be attributed in large measure to training we receive weekly through our counselor and Word of the Week initiative. Getting to join Character Club is a coveted incentive for our children to practice the character traits that are promoted weekly. The influence of intentionally teaching, demonstrating, and putting character education into practice has been fruitful in our school community.

Our school is small, but a spirit of family is evident to all who visit. We refer to Edmond Doyle Elementary as "the little school with a big heart". It is not just a place where learning is mastered, but a place where lives are touched and transformed. The warm, nurturing atmosphere creates a climate of trust between child and adult. Many refer to Edmond Doyle as the happy school. We work hard, we play hard, and we take learning seriously. We are the previous recipients of the 2014 National Blue Ribbon School award and have

leveraged the dedication and commitment inherent in this award by serving as a model school in our district. Edmond Doyle teachers mentor through professional learning communities and the collective efficacy of our district has grown exponentially. Our school patrons and the community at large take great pride in this achievement.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

Edmond Doyle teachers and staff use a variety of instructional methods. Within each classroom, one would see small and large group instruction, activity centers, group projects, and differentiated learning happening. We use peer tutoring whenever possible as this not only helps the child receiving help, but also gives the child that understands an opportunity to explain what knowledge they have acquired. By doing this, a sense of community is created and student mentorship is valued. Cooperative learning is an integral part of each classroom. Students learn to collaborate and use their critical thinking skills to complete projects and assignments. Student work is showcased frequently. Lastly, technology is an important tool in our school.

#### ELA

Our school is required to follow the Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (2016) for first through fourth grades. In order to satisfy the objectives per grade level, our school uses a variety of tools. Our Reading and Language Arts series is Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt: Journeys. Students are exposed to scientifically research-based instruction by reading stories with high student engagement. Our library provides books labeled with a lexile measure, and each child is given a reading inventory to determine his/her personal lexile and is expected to read and test his/her reading comprehension frequently through the Renaissance: Accelerated Reader program. Incentives are provided for students after points are accumulated. Teachers incorporate Phonics Dance, Structured Language Basics, and Drops in the Bucket. We have chosen these tools in order to incorporate learning styles to meet the needs of each student's learning modality.

#### Math

Our school is required to follow the Oklahoma Academic Standards: Mathematics for first through fourth grades. We have two math series: Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt: Saxon for grades one and two, and Savvas enVision for grades three and four. The enVision series encourages reading and writing to explain the fundamentals of math while demonstrating understanding. This has been a new approach for many, but we are definitely seeing the benefits of teaching math this way. We also use Alpha Plus for math instruction. We have been using a program called SoftSeven for our second through fourth grades to provide skills development in math facts memorization. We have a reward system for those that obtain mastery and have taken many of our students to regional competitions.

#### Science

Science is both incorporated into our ELA program and taught through Generation Genius and Mystery Science. Both programs are online resources that bring school science standards to life through fun and educational videos paired with activities, quizzes, reading material and more. Science is also taught weekly by our Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math (STEAM) teacher who uses science experiments and activities to build upon the classroom science standards.

#### Social Studies

Social Studies is also incorporated into our ELA program and taught through Social Studies Weekly for our third and fourth graders. Our counselor also supports our Social Studies program by presenting character traits weekly to promote good citizenship. Students are recognized monthly by being chosen as Student of the Month for exemplifying good character. A local history curriculum is provided for our third graders to learn about the history of our area.

#### Changes since March/April 2020

Edmond Doyle's curricula, instruction and assessments have completely changed over the course of the last two years. Upon the arrival of COVID-19 in March/April 2020, the school shifted to a virtual learning

environment with 1:1 student device. Edmond Doyle teachers took the curriculum from a pencil/paper static learning environment to a digitally dynamic learning environment. This presented both a learning curve for teachers and students. For the 2020-2021 school year, Edmond Doyle provided traditional (brick and mortar) instruction, blended instruction (students both virtual and in person) and completely virtual instruction. The school chose to offer the multiple approaches to learning to meet the needs of all of our students during this most difficult time. Due to this variety of instruction happening simultaneously, teachers had to transform their teaching strategies.

Teachers learned to use Screencastify, a screen recording software, to create multimedia presentations to share instruction with students via our Learning Management Systems, Seesaw and Google Classroom. Edmond Doyle first grade teachers collaborated with other first grade teachers from across the district to develop and put in effect a new online curriculum via Seesaw, a learning management system. This new online curriculum allows the students to create drawings, videos and audio recordings of themselves completing math problems and reading stories. This was very crucial to the success of online instruction. Second through fourth grade teachers collaborated across the district to create and implement a new online curriculum via Google Classroom, a learning management system. This new curriculum required teachers to learn how to use the Kami App to transform independent worksheets into collaborative workspaces for all students, regardless of the location of the collaborator. Furthermore, teachers have used Google Meets along with Jamboard in their classrooms to instruct students from all locations. Lastly, Edmond Doyle teachers used a variety of online resources to keep all students engaged during this year's instruction. Among these resources are Edpuzzle (an online program that allows teachers to imbed questions in instructional videos), Kahoot (a game-based learning platform that allows teachers to create questions and answers quizzes), Wordwall.net (a digital tool that allows teachers to develop activities for math facts, vocabulary review, phonics practice), and Boom Cards (digital, self-checking, interactive activities which allow students to get instant feedback on their answers).

The majority formative and summative assessments are now conducted online versus pencil paper. For formative assessments, teachers use multiple resources, including: Alpha Plus (Grades 3-4), Google Forms (Grades 2-4), IXL (Grades 2-4), Study Island (Grade 2), and game-based resources, such as Prodigy, Dreamscapes, Gimkit, Kahoot, and Wordwall.net. For summative assessments, all teachers use Renaissance/STAR benchmarks to assess students' progress, and grades three and four teachers use Alpha Plus benchmarks to assess the students' progress per Oklahoma Academic Standards. Assessment data is broken down at the building level, grade level, teacher, and student demographics. Teachers use data acquired from benchmark testing to form flexible groups and understand how to meet the individual needs of each student. Advanced organizers and graphic organizers are used to promote skills students can use to help them learn.

**1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):**

**1b. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Performing Arts

Edmond Doyle students attend Music twice a week for 40 -minute class periods. The curriculum is Quaver's Marvelous World of Music (QuaverEd) and Essential Elements Music Class Interactive by Hal Leonard. The students participate in Music by singing, listening, playing instruments, and movement activities. Due to Covid-19, playing instruments has been more restricted, but opportunities to play have still been provided. This year more emphasis has been on movement, such as body percussion, and Quaver interactive quizzes and games.

Vocal music, music theory, musical instruments, and performance are implemented. In non-COVID years, many students participate in Circle the State providing them an opportunity to enjoy and learn about music with children from all over Oklahoma. Before the pandemic, many participated in McAlester Music Makers which gave them a chance to perform for their community. Typically, a Christmas program is presented in the local auditorium for parents and family to enjoy. However, this year, the Christmas program was recorded in small groups in the music classroom, and the video was posted online for the parents and families to enjoy.

#### Education/Health/Nutrition

Each child has 120 minutes of physical education weekly. Activities include organized games, cardio strengthening, agility training, and coordination skills. Our goal is to promote the health and safety of our students and help them establish lifelong healthy behavior patterns. Our child nutrition service provides a healthy lunch and breakfast. We are a recipient of a grant that exposes children to a variety of fruits and vegetables.

#### Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math (STEAM)

Each class has one period of STEAM weekly. The curriculum follows the Oklahoma Academic Standards. A variety of science and math activities and concepts are introduced while incorporating both engineering and visual arts. Activities include learning about the Design Process, building problem solving skills, learning basic coding skills, and learning how every subject is a part of art.

#### Culture

Each class attends a Culture class once a week. During this time, the students learn about a vast array of cultures both near and far. Local culture, Native American culture, and the culture of our EL students are at the forefront of instruction.

#### Library

Each class has one period of Library weekly. During this time, grades one and two learn about sections of the library, how to check out books, listen to storytelling and participate in book discussions. The curriculum for grades three and four follows the Oklahoma Academic Standards for conducting research and using reference materials. These students complete research projects and create book report presentation boards to share with their classmates.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

Our district uses RTI as a way to intervene for those students lacking mastery of foundational and literacy reading skills. Students are benchmarked three times a year with Renaissance/START testing and from those benchmarks, reading tiers are formed. Students are grouped and regrouped throughout the course of the school year based on skills needing to be remediated and interventions required to gain mastery of new concepts taught. Students are progress monitored frequently to determine if the interventions in place are working or if a new direction is needed. Our second - grade students use Study Island benchmarks to assess reading skills mastery, and our third and fourth grade students, use Alpha Plus to identify strengths and weaknesses in both reading and math skills. Students performing above grade level are given ample opportunities for enrichment activities during our RTI time. These enrichment activities Native American cultural lessons with the Cultural Studies teacher and include musical enrichment studies. Also, these students are challenged to beat the principal's goals in both Accelerated Reading and SoftSeven, a math facts race.

Special education students receive individualized direct instruction in areas of greatest need as identified in various testing data. These students are provided classroom accommodations and

support to learn with their peers. Furthermore, the special education students receive tutoring with SPED teachers before and after school to help meet their individual needs. Edmond Doyle administers both formative and summative assessments in multiple formats, including presenting them written and orally, administering the assessments in small sections versus complete assessments, and administering the assessments with individual students or small groups.

EL students are served according to the English acquisition and academic needs. As 98% of our EL students are Hispanic, we are fortunate to have a bilingual paraprofessional that works with the classroom teachers to best serve these students. This is helpful in not only working with our most English deficient students, but also in communication with parents that speak little or no English. Regardless of the native language of EL students they are all served through pull out and in-class instruction. The District has provided Sheltered Language Instruction training each year for teachers in an effort to best serve this population.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Engaging students is the foremost practice at Edmond Doyle Elementary. Academics are at the forefront of our instructional day, delivered through a rigorous curriculum, and supported with positive reinforcement/reward as students make gains and milestones. Formative assessments are routinely utilized to gauge student progress/mastery. Celebrations abound as goals are reached, both on an individual and school-wide level.

Timely and relevant remediation is an essential component of our success model. A caring counseling staff is in place to address social/emotional growth and wellbeing within our student body. We strive to meet all student needs including those addressing food scarcity and potential latch key students. A Nutrition Club food bag is provided to those with demonstrated need. Herd Time, an after-school childcare and tutoring service, is provided to working families who need a safe extended learning environment for their children.

College and career readiness are addressed and emphasized throughout the school day. A STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) program has been established to promote inquiry -based learning, curiosity, and student engagement with an emphasis on FUN!

All of these initiatives were adapted during COVID-19 school closures. As remote learning was enacted, teachers ensured that students were comfortable and confident within the virtual classroom. It was a priority to us all that students felt a sense of continuity and extension of the classroom programming and supports they had previously received within the traditional school setting. As 1:1 technology was implemented for all students in McAlester, the district worked to ensure that wireless connectivity was equitably provided to ALL students by installing additional hot spots across the community and strengthening existing WIFI hubs across the district. At Edmond Doyle Elementary, teachers worked tirelessly to video engaging lessons and fun activities, while maintaining close contact with students and families. Home visits were also made as necessary to assist parents in navigating the digital environment, as many of them found themselves serving, for the first time, as “educators” themselves. The Google Voice application was also implemented, which allowed teachers to remain “on call” to parents at any time. On top of meeting diverse academic needs and navigating the uncharted waters of distance learning, the district also worked diligently to maintain the nutritional wellbeing of students by implementing a food delivery initiative, serving countless meals and nutritional snacks during the COVID-19 school closure. Nourished both academically and physically, our students at Edmond Doyle thrived despite the many hardships brought on by the global pandemic.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Edmond Doyle Elementary always looks forward to having visitors to our school. We encourage parents, volunteers, and community members to come whenever possible. During Covid, our volunteer hours have naturally dropped due to our campus being closed for safety purposes. However, our parents and community members have still contributed financially through monetary gifts or by sending items we have needed. We are certain that when our schools can open up, we will continue to see growth in volunteer hours.

Normally, we offer help to parents in need of technological assistance. We have not been able to have parents come into the schools as we have in the past. However, our district has provided WIFI and hot spots throughout our community. Teachers have been available to help parents learn how to operate SeeSaw and Google Classroom so they can work with their children during times of distance learning. Edmond Doyle teachers often met off campus to assist struggling parents and students with school work during distance learning. They became learners right alongside their children and have come to view the school as a warm and welcoming place where lifelong learning occurs!

A practice that Edmond Doyle parents expect to see daily is a homework folder, and every Thursday an additional folder goes home with important communication about what is happening at our school. The

principal writes a weekly newsletter to inform families about current and/or upcoming events. Each teacher sends home a weekly newsletter to inform families about what is happening and what might be needed in the classroom.

Family nights are an integral part of Edmond Doyle's success. Each semester teachers and staff design evenings to bring parents into school to participate with their children. Covid changed the way our family nights are normally conducted. In order to be safe, stations were set up outside this fall. Each station had an activity for students to practice reading skills. Math night will be done the same way in the spring. The decision to continue the practice reflects on how important we feel connecting with families is at Edmond Doyle. Doing it safely was a challenge. However, by practicing social distancing, wearing masks, taking temperatures, and using hand sanitizer between each station was successful.

Normally, we begin each year we with the Edmond Doyle Meet and Greet. This usually means a large gathering of families in our school. This year each child could have one person come to visit their classroom. Temperature checks, masks, and hand sanitizer were mandatory. Many of our parents did not have positive school experiences growing up and we seek to change that mindset. We want them to feel comfortable with us, and to trust that their children are going to have a great experience at school. This year we wanted them to know that their child was as safe as possible from Covid while they were with us.

We feel it is important to advertise what is going on at our school. We use Facebook, our MPS website, Remind, and eNotes to get information to our families. Our local newspaper also does a phenomenal job of reporting and depicting our events/activities frequently.

Parent-teacher conferences were held in person, virtually via Google Meet, and over the phone to help keep the spread of Covid down while giving parents and guardians the opportunity to know how their children were doing in school. It was a positive experience with high participation. Parents appreciated the many ways the conferences were offered.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Professional development has always been extremely important in our district and at Edmond Doyle Elementary. As one of the most forward-thinking districts in Oklahoma, McAlester Public Schools advocates professional growth for all its employees and teachers at Edmond Doyle take full advantage of this mindset. Our teachers eagerly pursue new ideas and resources to engage students meaningfully, and to foster learning environments that encourage students to learn how to use technology effectively. Technological jobs are our students' future and knowing how to understand technology is imperative for their success. Professional development is a priority at all schools in our district. Edmond Doyle teachers constantly embrace new opportunities to add more tools to their teaching in order to teach their students more effectively.

We take great pride in the fact that much of our professional culture is teacher driven. Edmond Doyle teachers are frequently asked to be presenters. Our 1:1 initiative has finally been achieved in our district. Pre-K, Kindergarten, and first graders have iPads. Second through twelfth graders have Chromebooks. Our teachers have become proficient in operating SeeSaw and Google Classroom in order to help our students learn whether they are in a brick and mortar or virtual setting. Several are members of our Tech Cadre, a digital learning group that works toward instructing teachers how to use technology effectively. Tech Tuesdays are an important component of our district professional culture. Every Tuesday our students implement newly learned skills during the day in order to become more computer literate. It is a district priority and commitment to our students and families that McAlester teachers will be proficient in utilizing technology to provide state of the art teaching and learning in our classrooms. The Edmond Doyle faculty fully embraces this concept. We are fully on board to make sure that our students are able to progress with technology as it evolves. Our goal is to prepare our students for a digital driven world.

Another aspect of our professional culture focuses on group empowered thinking. EdCamps, which bill themselves as "unconferences" were a professional learning format our teachers connected with immediately. Teachers from our school and others are gathering in droves to attend EdCamps to learn and

share ideas with teachers from other school districts and states. McAlester even took the lead in hosting its own innovative EdCamp McAlester. This training and shift in mindset have transformed teacher thinking and has been highly beneficial in creating opportunities for us to both share and learn from others in our district and beyond. We continue having a relationships with the University of Oklahoma's K20 Center in Norman. The K20 Center is dedicated to helping teachers understand the power of technology and how a collaborative classroom that teaches authentically can change the trajectory of a student's life. Edmond Doyle is a K20 grant recipient that provided technology and training for our school.

Our teachers are very involved in personal professional development. They are eager to discover new ideas and thoughts to make our school exemplary. The digital era we find ourselves living and working in truly requires teachers to also be lifelong learners.. They are constantly seeking knowledge through podcasts, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. Collaborating via Google Meet or Zoom with fellow teachers across the nation is also occurring. There is a sense of urgency in their quest to learn more about creating and navigating a classroom environment that is constantly emerging and evolving. Fortunately, we are able to see huge growth in our educators and leaders, and thereby, in our students who achieve at higher levels, develop an increased love of learning, and find themselves immersed in a positive school culture that supports their passions, needs, and interests.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Edmond Doyle has been an Oklahoma A school for nine years in a row. An accomplishment like this does not occur without strong leadership. The strength our school demonstrates is that when everyone works together for a common goal success is possible. The key word for our school is relationships. The principal, teachers, secretary, cooks, custodian, paraprofessionals, parents, and students have formed strong relational ties with students and families alike. This is intentional. We spend a great deal of time making these connections. When students are absent, we ensure someone from our school calls home to check on them. If anything is needed, educationally related or not, we ensure our students' needs are met. Car rides are given if needed and parents know they can trust us with their concerns. The principal and teachers are in constant communication with parents and genuinely care about their children. Any opportunity for positive interaction is taken.

In our school culture, shared leadership is foundational to our mission and vision. It works well for Edmond Doyle and provides a sense of continuity and commitment not always present in other schools. We have essentially formed a family. For our students, this is very important. Many come from dysfunctional situations where childhood trauma is taking place. For them to be able to come to a secure environment that provides love, safety, and nurturing is crucial for their social and emotional success. We wholeheartedly believe that if a child's social and emotional needs are met, learning can take place. We also stress the importance of good choices. Too many children at our school live at the expense of others' poor choices. Drug addiction, alcohol abuse, and neglect are often their reality. We feel committed to show our students that the choices they make as children will affect their future. If their present situation is not ideal, we teach them they do have control over their future through their choices and actions.

Our school is a Title One school. Many of our students lack resources. Our community does a great deal to bridge this gap and help meet our students' basic needs. We teach them to accept the help while looking for ways to pay it forward when they are educated adults. We stress the importance of getting an education, because we know for many it will be the key to escaping poverty. We are also teaching them that by learning how to read, write, understand math, and with great effort they can obtain a lifestyle they may desire. They do not have to remain victims to their circumstances. To achieve this we offer character development and guidance classes. We want our students to become positive leaders in their classroom and eventually in their community.

#### **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Student equity is at the forefront of the culture of Edmond Doyle Elementary. As many of our students are from homes of poverty, we strive daily to make sure they are given every opportunity

to succeed. From the moment they walk through our doors, we plan and strive for nothing less. We understand the trauma and cost to social/emotional wellness that comes with the obstacles and challenges many of them face. All Edmond Doyle students are supported academically through RTI programs and other staff supports, emotionally through strongly forged teacher/student connections and school embedded counseling services, and socially by providing every student need from school supplies to clothing to food. Devices were also provided to all students to level the playing field in digital learning. Equity of resources will not be a reason that Edmond Doyle students fail to thrive. WIFI hotspots were installed throughout our community, especially in areas of our city where our underserved student populations are concentrated in greatest number. By prioritizing equity and wireless connectivity for ALL students, we ensure that access to information and academic content will be available to every child regardless of neighborhood, socio-economic status, and their lives away from school. We choose not to leave the success and future opportunity of our students to chance. We work diligently to ensure that they are cared for, loved, supported, and nurtured in a way that may not be present in their own homes.

Edmond Doyle celebrates all cultures and works diligently to include all students. We have a high percentage of native students in our community. We incorporate the broader Native American traditions and cultures into our daily instructional practices through our Indian Education department who provides everything from curriculum to tutoring to enrichment and remediation for all students. While we are located squarely in the heart of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, more than 39 tribal nations are located within the state of Oklahoma, and many more are represented in our student population. Likewise, we serve our EL (English Learner) population (which is 98% Hispanic) by providing an EL paraprofessional who works with those students and also serves as a link in communication with our Hispanic parents who do not speak English. Respect for diversity in traditions, ethnicities, languages and cultures is non-negotiable in our school. Respect is granted to ALL. Teachers and staff create a climate of mutual respect with the students in their charge, and with one another. Many of our students come from homes where this is not modeled, but they see it demonstrated daily in our practices. We want students to leave our school honoring diversity and having the tools to treat others well.

Current events have presented many challenges in addressing the needs of all students. During the pandemic we reached out to all families to support them academically, digitally, emotionally, and nutritionally if needed. During Covid-19 school closures, computers were delivered to homes/families without the means to come to school to pick them up. Digital sessions were held daily to expand upon that connection and learning with students. If students were not present in the online classroom during the digital sessions, phone calls and home visits were made to ensure their well-being. Families were trained extensively on the digital learning platform, which promoted greater parent engagement and attention to student learning. Because so many were uncertain about navigating the waters of the digital classroom, many parents found themselves both in the role of learner and teacher at home. It was indeed a brave new world, but with great collaboration, care, and constant connection we achieved success together. Our students and teachers alike are wiser and stronger for it.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The one practice that has been most instrumental to Edmond Doyle's continued ability to successfully educate and support students since school closure in March 2020, has been to shift the instruction to virtual learning. With the inability to meet with students in an in-person classroom, teachers had to modify their instructional practices. In the beginning, this was as simple as teachers using digital worksheets and pre-made videos to post on Seesaw or Google Classroom. However, it was quickly identified this was not adequate for our students to be successful. In order to keep our students engaged and allow them to achieve academic success, our teachers discovered the students needed to see their teacher's instruction via video and they needed to be able to synchronously interact with their teacher through video conferencing. The teachers learned to video themselves teaching and upload the videos for student access from home. They also conducted daily live Google Meets to keep students engaged in the learning process. Lastly, the student without a home Internet had to have additional support as they were not always able to join virtually. Teachers learned to use Google Voice to both call and text parents and students during the school closure. This allowed students to hear and participate with the students who were virtual by dialing into the virtual classroom. Furthermore, incentives were given for attendance to the Google Meets and completing online assignments to raise student involvement. To adopt this practice, our teachers received over twenty hours of technology integration professional development. Furthermore, our parents and students received video tutorials explaining how to use all of the new online technology platforms.

As the 2020-2021 school year has progressed, the teachers have continued to refine what virtual learning and instruction should look like. From using educational technology to substitute what takes place in the classroom to redefining what elementary education looks like, Edmond Doyle is a completely different school than it was just two short years ago. From printed textbooks and paper worksheets, to students creating digital content using iPads and Chromebooks, shifting the instruction to virtual learning to help meet the needs of all students, near or far, has been instrumental to the school's continued ability to successfully educate and support our students.